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ABSTRACT

A program successful in developing the teaching skills of both experienced and new faculty members at The Autonomous University of the North East (Universidad Autonoma del Noreste) at Saltillo, Coahuila, Mexico, is described. The program has incorporated several literature-based features of effective programs: presentation of supportive theory of skills, demonstration of competencies, practice in simulated and actual settings, structured and open-ended feedback, coaching for application, individualization, incentives for participation, and administrative support. The program involves four 1-day seminars, beginning with an induction program and followed by planning for teaching and developing the course syllabus, use of teaching strategies and evaluation of learning, and assessment of teaching. Lectures, discussions, collaborative learning, role playing, small group activities, individual practice, and microteaching are employed. Nine references are included. Appendices contain objectives and schedules for program presentations. (JDD)

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Meeting Adjunct Faculty Teaching Needs Through a Faculty Development Program: It is Possible!

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Twelfth Annual International Conference on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators

May 20-23,1990
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Introduction

The quest for excellence in college and university teaching is a world wide concern. This movement is evidenced by the international national and state wide teaching conferences, regional seminars, local workshops and institutions-based faculty development programs all over the world. This concern arose in response to a particular need that began to emerge by the 1970's. As Massey suggested, that need was for "colleges and universities to pay attention to the quality of pedagogy practiced in their classrooms; to asses how effectively professors were teaching and how successfully students were learning" (1982).

The growing concern for excellence in college teaching has contributed to development of organized efforts not only to introduce new faculty to the basics of teaching but also to upgrade the teaching competence of experienced faculty.

Improving the teaching competence of faculty will continue to be a necessity. Competent professors, previously able to deliver instruction effectively, are now faced not only with new teaching modes and technology but with a much diverse student population as well. Furthermore, it is good practice for all, even experienced professors need to rethink, review and enhance their teaching practice from time to time. In addition, new college and university instructors, full or part time, may lack specific training in education and have no teaching experience, and they often " come into the profession with few good role models, these beginning instructors usually have to fumble their way through their first year " (Lewis, Svinicki and Stice, 1985).

Several institutions have initiated, organized and provided orientation programs for their new faculty members . This has

ocurred not only in the United States, but also in other countries as well, including México. As a result the design, implementation and evaluation of faculty development programs have become a priority in both, public and private institutions of higher learning.

Experiences of designing, implementing, and evaluating effective faculty development programs need to be shared with others interested in the field of faculty development . Innovations of this nature should be disseminated and tested in new situations. With this goal in mind this paper will address a program that has been successful in meeting the needs of both experienced and new faculty members at The Autonomous University of the North East (Universidad Autónoma del Noreste - UANE) at Saltillo, Coahuila, México.

The program at UANE has contributed a great deal to the development of teaching skills of the university's faculty. Since 1984 it has served more than 800 adjunct professors as well as a number of full time professors. It has incorporated several features of effective programs as supported by the literature. These characteristics include presentation of supportive theory of skills, demonstration of competencies, practice in simulated and actual settings, structured and open-ended feedback (provision of information about performance), coaching for application (hands-on support and assistance) as suggested by Van Tulder (1988). Other features include individualization, grouping for training, incentives for participation, policies (Harris,1989) and administrative support. In this paper a brief description of the program's setting and its characteristics is presented, the program design (Objectives, content, delivery strategies, evaluation, and follow-up) is described, specific benefits are highlighted, and some advantages and disadvantages are also identified.

The Setting

The Autonomous University fo the North East (UANE), a private institution of higher education located in Saltillo, Coahuila, México, was established 16 years ago. It is composed of five campuses, each located in a major city of the state of Coahuila. Each site has a campus director and academic coordinators for each degree program.

Most of this university's professors fall within the category of adjunct faculty because they have full time responsibilities at other organizations. In general, although they have a variety of professional backgrounds and experience, few have had formal preparation in education and teaching. Some have been teaching at the college level for several years; whereas others have just began to teach. Still others are considering the possibility of becoming university professors. Those who have taught for some time fine tuned their teaching skills as opposed to those who have just begun their college teaching careers.

Professors are ranked using an education and experience format (See Appendix A). Their teaching performance is assessed using a formative evaluation system through which academic coordinators (program heads), professors, and students have input. This system allows professors to receive, reflective and interactive feedback providing an opportunity for the improvement of their teaching skills. They also receive assistance as they work towards applying new competencies.

The need to provide faculty programs has been recognized since the establishment of this university, and several efforts have been aimed towards this goal. The educational model upon which is based is identified as the Intensive Modular System, an approach similar to that employed in intensive summer programs of some American colleges and universities. UANE offers a general education preparatory program (last two years of high-school) as well as undergraduate and graduate programs in different areas of knowledge . It serves about 5,000 students, and is highly

committed to quality in higher education teaching.

The diversity of professional backgrounds, teaching experience and needs at the university, called for an approach that was flexible enough to provide experiences at different levels of depth, content and pace. It was necessary to respond to particular needs such as teaching competency development, recognition, association, and self actualization. Therefore, as a curricular reform process was initiated during the academic year of 1981-82 a Competency Based Individualized Learning Modules (Mc Cleary, 1979) approach was adopted. Although this approach was seen as " a viable alternative to better respond to the variety of needs and to the improvement of teaching " (Ovando, 1984), after two years of implementation, it was imperative to redesign the program due to the participants' unfamiliarity with an individualized format. Before the present program was initiated a follow-up survey was conducted, the results of which suggested that most professors valued the content of the program (the teaching act, instructional objectives, interaction analysis, content analysis, and climate analysis) and suggested other topics like teaching methods and evaluation of learning. Based on this follow-up, it was decided that the competency based approach could infact suit the teaching needs and learning styles of most professors, with a modification in format.

The Program

In redesigning the program for this faculty development endeavor, an effort was made to provide a combination of theory and practice. An eclectic approach was selected so a variety of strategies could be used in order to facilitate competency development, practice and interaction.

Four one day seminars are offered on Saturdays at least once each semester or as needed. Lectures, discussions, and collaborative learning are some of the delivery modes utilized to introduce the theory supporting the competence. Role playing, small group activities, individual practice, and microteaching are employed to

provide opportunities for discussion, application and feedback.

The program includes four levels. Each level has a set of specific competencies to be attained, specific delivery strategies, learning products, evaluation criteria for accreditation and career ladder purposes. Table 1 illustrates each level, its specific content and corresponding credit points.

Table 1
Program Levels, Content and Credit Points

Levels	Content	Credit
I	InductionProgram	15
II	Planning for Teaching and the Course Syllabus	15
III	Teaching Strategies and Evaluation of Learning	15
IV	Assessment of Teaching	15

The program at each level begins with a brief introduction of participants themselves. They provide their names, academic background, professional experience and area of teaching. Expectations and objectives are explained and clarified, and supporting theory and content are presented, small group discussions are conducted and simulations and applications dealing with the specific topics of the level are utilized (For a detailed description of each level see Appendix B) . A microteaching session is conducted as an important component at every level. Each professor teaches a mini lesson with some professors acting as students and others acting as observers. Feedback is provided immediately after each microteaching and suggestions are recorded on a flipchart. As a conclusion, topics are reviewed and a set of recommendations is summarized based on the session's feedback. The duration of each level varies from 6 to 8 hours. Professors usually meet from 9:00

a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

At the end of each seminar a deadline is agreed upon (usually a week after each program) for professors to submit specific assignments (See Appendix B). These assignments are reviewed by the faculty development director and returned to professors with a letter of recognition including the credit points earned and some comments and suggestions. Earned points are a component of the classification system as it is displayed on Appendix A. Each time a professor obtains credits, these are used to increase his or her monetary compensation. This allows professors to see that tangible advantages can also be gained by attending the program, and submitting the corresponding assignment. This financial incentive encourages professors to attend and complete all four levels.

In addition to the opportunities for analysis and discussion of each topic, professors receive a set of supporting materials . These handouts are organized according to the central topic of each level and include relevant literature and a bibliography for future reference.

Each seminar is evaluated using an open-ended format. Professors are requested to answer the following three questions:

1. Were the objectives of this seminar achieved?
2. How did you like the program?
3. Would you recommend other professors to attend this seminar?

A large majority of the evaluations from 1984 to 1988 suggest that objectives were being achieved and expectations were being met, the content was relevant to needs, professors truly enjoyed and learned in a positive climate, and they not only would recommend the program but also suggest that it be a requirement for all faculty members.

Given the increasing number of interested faculty after the first two years of implementation, the need to train trainers for each campus emerged. Although trainers are charged with the responsibility to schedule, conduct and evaluate programs according

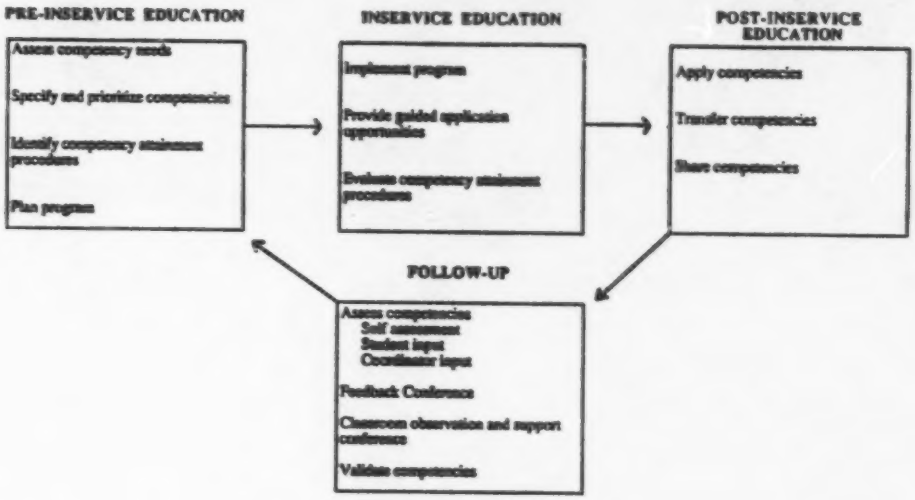
to specific campus needs, assignments and evaluations are submitted to the faculty development director for review of assignments, accreditation and quality follwo-up purposes.

An important component of the program is the formative evaluation and follow-up component. This component includes an evaluation system, previously mentioned , in which professors, students and the academic coordinator have input by using an structured survey instrument (Some of the items included which relate to the program content are: achievement of objectives, use of teaching methodologies, explanation of the course syllabus, use of examples and illustrations, etc.). This instrument incorporates three sets of data regarding the teaching practice, as suggested by Harris. These are the professor as "introspector," the academic coordinator as a " systematic describer" and the students as " thoughtful interactors" (1986). After collecting these data, the coordinator computes and analyzes the results in order to provide feedback to professors during an individual conference (UANE,1985).

In addition, classroom visits are arranged, after each seminar, to gather data about actual teaching practices and application of competencies. An an open-ended format is used. It addresses two aspects of professor's teaching skills; areas of strength and areas of need. Students are requested to answer two questions: 1) How do you like the course and 2) How do you like the way the course is taught? After summarizing these responses and editing notes taken during the classroom visit, feedback is provided to professors with the intent of acknowledging effective teaching practice and bringing about agreement on changes or provide suggestions, if needed. By employing these two follow-up practices, teaching competencies are validated and support is provided for the application of newly developed competencies. The follow-up component allows the faculty development personnel to assist professors at their level of competence and commitment. Figure 1 illustrates the competency based systematic process followed by the faculty development program at UANE.

Figure 1

Competency Based Systematic Approach to Inservice Education



A program of this nature can only be in place with the appropriate administrative commitment and support. Thus a policy stating the criteria for promotion purposes clearly indicates that professors must attend these seminars in order to gain credit points that will benefit them (UANE,1986). It is also specified that professors must begin by attending level I and that they have to teach at least one course before they attend the next level. Another guideline suggests that all four seminars should be conducted at least once each semester and that campuses may offer the program as needed.

Funding for this program is provided by a specific account for faculty development purposes. Some costs are associated with travel and room and board expenses for the faculty development director and trainers when they are requested to conduct seminars at various campuses. Other expenses include printing for handouts, supporting materials, name tags, flipchart paper, markers, masking tape, pencils, folders and paper, etc. Coffee break supplies, food and refreshments for lunch are other expenses.

The presence of the president, campus heads and academic coordinators at each campus during the implementation of the program is another indicator of the administrative commitment to the program. These officers join professors in some of the sessions and for coffee breaks and lunch, thus providing professors opportunities for interaction and socialization.

From the review of the evaluation data, it can be concluded that this faculty development program for adjunct professors has been successful. Some of the responses suggest that the program is meeting the teaching needs as well as satisfying needs for recognition, association and self actualization. The satisfaction of those who participate is documented by the evaluations that are filed as input for continuous review and improvement of each level.

Some of the major strengths of the program, as indicated by participants are:

1) Opportunity to meet and interact with various faculty members from other disciplines.
2) The focus of each level which is relevant to their teaching practice.
3) Opportunities to discuss and share their knowledge and teaching styles.
4) Relief in seeing colleagues having the same teaching or discipline difficulties.
5) Opportunity to apply the information to their specific content area and actually have some guided practice and feedback.
6) Immediate feedback and assistance to improve teaching practice.
7) The opportunity to observe effective teaching practices used in other fields.
7) Chance to learn from contemplating teaching practices of experienced faculty.
8) Opportunity to develop a new image of the professorship.

The few criticisms which the program has received suggest that professors are concerned with the length of the program (1 day seminars). For some it seems to be short and for others it seems to be too long. Others suggest that some of the simulations could be

redundant and tiresome due to the number of participants (this could happen if the number of participants is greater than 12) .

Other benefits of the program are:

1) A faculty development structure (faculty development director at central office and a trainer for each campus) is now in operation.

2) An academic supervision program was initiated with the purpose of providing instructional support services. This is based on the human resources approach to supervision which emphasizes that professors are competent and qualified to make contributions to education, if provided the opportunity.

3) A few of those who participated at the initiation of the program decided to enroll in the master of education program of the university.

Concluding Statement

In a retrospective analysis, it can be indicated that the faculty development program of the Universidad Autónoma has been successful in meeting particular needs .The setting briefly described, the explanation of the program and the identification of some benefits evidence the continuous effort to promote quality of higher education teaching of a private university. This program has proven to be effective for adjunct professors, but it is thought that it can also be effective with full time professors.

As any formal endeavor sponsored by a specific organization to serve the teaching needs of professors, it has some advantages as well as some disadvantages. Some of the advantages are: Flexibility to modify the content of each level or to add another level according to needs assessment or suggestions of professors and also to offer seminars at various times (Some campuses offer them in two or three evening sessions) depending on the professors' availability. Another advantage is the development of collegiality among professors, which in turn promotes commitment, thoughtful planning, practice and satisfaction with teaching. The opportunity

to use the expertise and talents of all participants is another advantage because all professors (inexperienced and experienced) have something to contribute and a sense of professionalism is developed.

On the other hand, one of the disadvantages might be the limitation on the number of participants. Each level is designed for small groups of 10-12 members. Another apparent disadvantage is related to day the program is offered (Saturdays), although this can be moved to other days of the week.

After more than five years of experience in developing, implementing and evaluating the program, some lessons were learned. Faculty development programs should:

1) Be practical and transferable to professors teaching practice.
2) Incorporate a variety of delivery modes.
3) Allow professors time to share experiences, and apply new competencies.
4) Incorporate a formative evaluation and feedback component.
5) Incorporate follow-up strategies in order to support application and transfer of new competencies,
6) Have adequate guidelines for the design, implementation and evaluation of programs.
7) Be designed to include tangible advantages and incentives.
8) Include human relations development as well as team development.
9) Encourage participants to engage in other professional growth efforts.
10) Provide opportunities to develop colleagueship.
11) Have the necessary administrative support.
12) Be accesible to most interested faculty.

This program and the efforts undertaken by other institutions remind us that the improvement of university teaching is a persistent need. The design of innovative programs to improve quality of teaching and to work towards excellence in colleges and universities will continue to be a world wide concern.

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Appendix A

AUTONOMOUS UNIVERSITY OF THE NORTH EAST
Professor Classification

Professor's Name _____Date _____

Faculty Development Director _____Points _____ Rank _____

1. TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

A Teaching experience at UANE (teaching different courses)

Number of courses	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 25	26 or more
Points	3	6	16	30	35

B Teaching experience at UANE (teaching spcecialization courses)

Number of Courses	1	2	3	4 to 10	11 or more
Points	3	6	9	20	35

C Previous teaching experience at other colleges or universities

Number of years	3 to 6	7 to 10	11 to 14	15 or more
Points	15	20	25	35

2. ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

Level	Graduate	B.A.	Graduate Student*	Specialization	M.A	Ph.D.
Puntos	20	30	35	40	55	70

3. PRESTIGE

A Professional experience in the field of specialization

Number of years	2 to 5	6 to 8	9 to 15	16 to 20	21 or more
Points	10	20	40	50	100

B Publications and Research

Concept	Thesis	Articles**	Pub. Research	Text book	Other Books	Over 5000 volumes
Points	20	30	40	50	100	120

C Excecutive Experience

Years	3 to 5	6 to 9	10 to 12	14 to 17	18 or more
Points	20	40	60	90	120

4. PEDAGOGICAL PREPARATION

A Inservice Education at UANE

Levels	I	II	III	IV
Points	15	30	45	60

B Formal Preparation in Education

Degree	Normal School/B.A	Specialization	M.A.	Ph.D.
Points	30	40	50	70

C Preparation in Education in other instutions

Number of Hours	50-75	76-120	121-175	176-250	251 or more
Points	5	10	15	20	25

GENERAL CLASSIFICATION

Accepted	F	20-45
Qualified	E	46-69
Good	D	70-89
Very Good	C	90-119
Oustanding	B	120-155
Excellent	A	156-More

* At least 4 graduate courses completed

** Publications in periodicals

Appendix B

Level I: Induction Program

Objectives: Upon completion of this level, professors will be able to:

1.- Describe the university, its organization, modular system, procedures and regulations.

2.- Incorporate teaching recommendations into their teaching practice.

Time	Topic	Strategy
9:00 a.m.	General Introduction	Individual Presentation
9:30 a.m.	The university and its organization	Lecture
10:15 a.m.	The student as an individual and social person	Small Group activity and Lecture
10:45 a.m.	Break	Refreshments
11:00 a.m.	The first day of Class	Microteaching
1:00 p.m.	Lunch hosted by UANE	
2:00 p.m.	The role and functions of the academic coordinator	Lecture
2:30 p.m.	University regulations	Reading and Discussion
3:00 p.m.	The teaching components of a class	Brainstorming and Lecture
3:30 p.m.	Break	Refreshments
3:45 p.m.	Teaching a regular class	Microteaching
5:45 p.m.	UANE's student profile	Small group activity
6:15 p.m.	Managing classroom discipline	Brainstorming and lecture

Accreditation

Professors attending this level get 15 credit points if they attend all day and actively participate in at least one microteaching session.

Level II: Planning for Teaching

Objectives: Upon completion of this level professors will be able to:

1.- Apply the components of the Teaching Act Model and assess its potential for their own teaching.

2.- Write instructional objectives incorporating the three distinguishing characteristics, for their particular fields.

Time	Topic	Strategy
9:00 a.m.	The Teaching Act Model	Lecture and group discussion and application activities
10:30 a.m.	Break	Refreshments
10:45 a.m.	Instructional Objectives	Lecture, critique of groups and individual writing of objectives
12:30 a.m.	Lunch hosted by UANE	
1:30 p.m.	Program (course syllabus) design	Brainstorming, lecture, Review of existing course syllabi Individual writing of course syllabus
3:00 p.m.	Break	Refreshments
3:15 p.m.	Application of information and recommendations	Microteaching and feedback
5:00 p.m.	Summary and conclusions	

Accreditation

Professors attending this level get 15 credit points if they actively participate in all sessions and submit two comprehensive course syllabi.

LEVEL III.- Teaching Methods and Evaluation

Objectives: Upon completion of this level, professors will be able to:

1.- Identify the major characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of alternative teaching methods.
2.- Select and apply teaching methods.
3.- Identify and apply alternative strategies for testing student learning.
4.- Use student feedback to improve learning and teaching

Time	Topic	Strategy
9:00 a.m.	Teaching methods in higher education	Lecure and small groupdiscussion
10:30 a.m.	Break	Refreshments
10:45 a.m.	Group dymanics strategies	Lecture and small group discussion
12:30 a.m.	Lunch hosted by UANE	
1:30 p.m.	Evaluation of learning: types of evaluation, types of tests and student feedback	Lecture, small group discussion and writing of tests.
3:00 p.m.	Break	Refreshments
3:15 p.m.	Application of teaching methods and group dynamics techniques	Microteaching
6:00 p.m.	Summmary and conclusions	

Accreditation

Professors attending this level get 15 credit points only if they activiley participate in all sessions and submit two tests for their own classes, including specific grading criteria.

LEVEL IV.- Evaluation of Teaching

Objectives: Upon completion of this level, professors will be able to:

1.- Understand and accept evaluation of teaching for developmental purposes

2.- Observe a class, identify areas of need and suggest alternatives for improvement of teaching.

Time	Topic	Strategy
9:00 a.m.	Content Analysis	Lecture and small group discussion
10:30 a.m.	Break	Refreshments
10:45a.m.	Climate Analysis	Lecture, and small group discussion
12:15 p.m.	Lunch hosted by UANE	
1:30 p.m.	Interaction analysis	Lecture, and small group discussion
2:00 p.m.	Break	Refreshments
2:15 p.m.	Classroom observations	Small group activity, analysis of a class video, collection of data, interpretation and recommendations
4:15 p.m.	Summary and conclusions	

Accreditation

Professors attending this level get 15 credit points only if they actively participate in all sessions and submit a written report of at least two classroom observations.

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